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Russia

Christianity and World Problems: No. 2

RUSSIA

A WARNING AND A CHALLENGE

BY

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NEW  YORK
GEORGE H. DORAN COMPANY

Ten Cents Net

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RUSSIA: A WARNING AND A CHALLENGE

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PRINTED IN THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

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PUBLISHER'S NOTE

This pamphlet seeks impartially to state the facts observed in a recent trip to Russia, allowing the reader to form his own conclusions. Where views are expressed they are purely personal and do not represent those of any organization. The pamphlet contains, with additional material, brief selections from Chapters IV and IX of the author's book "THE NEW WORLD OF LABOR," published by George H. Doran Company, 240 pages, \$1.50. Table of Contents: Chapters I, Industrial China; II, The New Japan; III, India's Industrial Revolution; IV, The Reconstruction of Russia; V, The Evolution of Labor in the West; VI, The British Labor Movement; VII, Labor in Europe; VIII, American Labor Problems; IX, The Challenge of a New World of Labor.

INTRODUCTION

At the entrance of Petrograd, the former capital of Russia, there stands in the public square the vulgar, squat and bulging statue of the royal autocrat, Alexander III. No statue in the world so embodies the insolence of autocracy. Instead of destroying this statue the Bolshevik leaders of the Russian Workers Revolution of November 7, 1917, with a fine sense of humor have carefully preserved it and have placed under it the following significant inscription: "My father and son during their lifetime paid the price of their tyranny (both were assassinated), while I stand here as a miserable scarecrow *to warn all nations* of the sin of autocracy." All Russia, as well as this statue, stands before the world today both as a warning and a challenge. She is a warning not to drift blindly, as her former government did, to its impending doom; she is a challenge to every nation to put its house in order before it is too late.

With the thought in mind of studying the significance of the present movement we visited Russia. Concerning no other country has there been such a flood of propaganda, both red and white, such exaggeration and distortion of fact in the interest of passion and prejudice. In no other country did we find it so difficult simply to see and to tell the truth objectively. For instance, as we crossed the border we saw the red flag and the soldiers of the red army. To one traveler in our compartment they suggested the red of bloodshed and the terror, to another the great principle of the blood of a common humanity of one brotherhood. The determining factor was the attitude of the observer. It is so throughout Russia. Some can see nothing good, and others nothing bad, because of their prejudice.

Our one desire has been to keep an open mind and to be fair; to record impartially and objectively what we saw. During our visit, from Riga through Russia and back to the Polish border, we moved everywhere with perfect freedom. We went anywhere alone by night or day, chose our own interpreters, selected the factories we wished to inspect, saw everything we desired and talked with everybody we wished, whether they were friends or foes of the present régime. Nowhere have we been accorded greater kindness, courtesy and freedom of movement; or met more frank, fearless and honest men than some of the leaders we interviewed. We

criticized freely the methods of the government and told the leaders the evils we observed in their system.

With all its faults the present government impressed us as better than the hideous régime of old Czarist Russia which we found a decade ago. Instead of the hunger and famine in Moscow, "the city of the dead," of two years before, it is now stirring with new life and its population has increased from one to two millions. Shops are open, private business is thriving, buying and selling in industry and agriculture are in full swing; everywhere streets are being paved, houses repaired and painted and life is quickened by a new hope.

We attended the great All-Russian Agricultural and Home Industries Exhibition where the whole life of Russia is focused and visualized from the Arctic to the semi-tropics, from the Esquimaux of the Pacific to Turkestan and the borders of India. We saw their exhibits of industry, agriculture, peasant life and the working of their great Co-operatives. We observed their demonstrations and tourist parties for nearly a million peasants brought in from all the Russias to be instructed in the use of tractors and modern machinery, for demonstrations in methods of farming, the conduct of community centers, social welfare and training for citizenship.

With all its mistakes, which are many, we found an actual government composed for the most part of workingmen, administering with growing success the most extensive state in the world. And they are in a measure economically succeeding after facing for six years probably the most colossal combination of difficulties which ever confronted a single people in the same period of time. They have had to overcome the inheritance of a corrupt Czarist régime, the greatest loss of any nation in the World War, a world blockade and two revolutions. They have had to meet allied invasion from without and counter revolutionary white armies within, fighting at one time on twelve fronts. They have had to contend with the strike and sabotage of almost their whole bureaucracy and united bourgeois opposition. Finally, they have had to pass in turn through chaos, bankruptcy and awful famine.

Despite the almost daily prophecy of their speedy downfall, and their widespread unpopularity, they have emerged from all this not only more firmly entrenched than ever, but apparently the most enduring cabinet or party in Europe

today. The Conservative Baldwin Government in Britain, and that of Poincaré in France, Stresemann in Germany and Mussolini in Italy give promise of falling long before that in Russia. We refer in this connection to the government as enduring, in the British sense of the cabinet or party in power, not to the social order. Nearly all responsible leaders in Russia agree that the people are utterly sick of further war, or revolution, or foreign intervention which proved such a miserable failure and that there is no other party in sight that could preserve law and order in Russia.

Now let us face the facts. Here is a movement of vast possible significance for good or evil, which must be studied and interpreted if we are to understand the present international situation.

As we endeavored to focus our thought and sum up our conflicting impressions of Russia, which is today such a strange mixture of good and evil, we found that they could not be reduced to a single formula. Rather we were forced to note the things wherein Russia constitutes a warning to the world, and those in which she is a challenge to other nations. Here was a nation which had suffered centuries of oppression, at the hands both of the State and of the Church; under autocracy, aristocracy and plutocracy, under a system which was the antithesis of liberty, equality and fraternity. The leaders who rose to throw off the tyranny of this system sought earnestly to establish a new social order of righteousness. But in destroying the evil of the old order they swept away also much that was good. They sought to set up on a vast scale a government of the working masses, by the workers, for the workers. But in their determination to abolish the tyranny of the rule of the bourgeois class they finally felt themselves driven to a party dictatorship which denied liberty to the rest of the people. In seeking to abolish the superstition and abuses of a reactionary and political state church, they almost rooted up the wheat with the tares, and wellnigh threatened to destroy religion itself. Thus in its temporary dictatorship and tyranny Russia constitutes a warning to other nations. But in so far as they seek to build anew a state which shall provide liberty and justice for all exploited peoples, Russia constitutes a challenge to the world. These we may state briefly at the outset as follows:

RUSSIA A WARNING

1. Russia stands as a warning and menace in its orthodox Marxian policy of *the class war and the dictatorship of the proletariat*. They believe that other countries have a veiled dictatorship of the privileged one-tenth, while they claim a frank dictatorship on behalf of the hitherto unprivileged nine-tenths who constitute the working masses. They claim that this dictatorship is temporary, and that once it has been fully established by a minority on behalf of the majority, it will automatically terminate all class distinctions, abolish itself and take in the whole united communal society. But the love of power may prove an evil and a tyranny as great as the love of money which they decry. Class war means class hatred, and it means a civil war of force and violence.

2. There is a fundamental *denial of liberty* to all who oppose the government, similar to that of the old régime. Russia has always had a strong, stern, centralized, autocratic government. As we compare Russia under the Bolsheviks, and under the Czar as we saw it a decade ago, the present government appears to be better than that of the old system. But there is little room for the expression of public opinion, no freedom of the press, and no liberty for voting or acting on economic, social or religious issues in opposition to the policy of the present government. For the present at least they frankly profess dictatorship rather than democracy. The priceless possession of the spirit of liberty, after a thousand years of struggle, has been abandoned, at least for the present.

3. There is a continued bureaucracy, compulsion and *state control of life*, often similar to that of the old régime, that does not allow the same free play for independence and individual initiative that is found in other countries. There is a remarkable *discipline* in the Communist Party which is today guiding the destinies of the 132,000,000 people of Russia. Of the body politic, the directing brain and nervous system is the Communist Party of 450,000; the body and hands are the workers in organized trade unions numbering some 5,000,000; the ponderous limbs are the more than 110,000,000 peasants who constitute 85 per cent of the population. Most of the rest are considered vestigial survivals like the appendix which once had a functional use. This dominance of the

Communist Party constitutes an abnormal control which is a denial of democracy.

4. There is an evident *lowering of standards in higher education*, especially in the universities. Russia has a remarkable plan for primary, practical and technical education, though she lacks means as yet adequately to carry it out. But there has been a frank suppression of idealistic teaching in philosophy, theology and cultural studies; a suppression of academic freedom, and a dilution of the universities in the interest of practical, utilitarian education for the working classes. There is a whole Russian university in Berlin composed largely of professors and students who were banished for their idealism or who fled from the terror or from the red armies.

5. There is still a painful *lack of moral and spiritual standards* in Russian life, chiefly as the result of the inherited corruption of the Czarist régime, the pressure of poverty, and a materialistic and atheistic interpretation of life. Typical of this lack of moral standards we may take the statement of Joffe in an article entitled "Revolutionary Methods," in the official Moscow IZVESTIA, dated January 1, 1919: "To deceive your class enemy, to violate, to destroy a treaty imposed by force, but never to sin against the revolutionary proletariat, never to violate the obligation taken on yourself before the revolution—those are the true revolutionary methods of the true revolutionary struggle."

As a result of this situation, liberty, religion and idealism will have to fight for their very life in Russia during this generation as in no other country in the world.

6. Despite the measure of liberty of conscience and religious toleration which the government has allowed to the Church and to all who have real religious convictions, there is a frankly avowed *atheism, materialism and anti-religious policy* of the individual members of the Communist Party. At the plenary meeting of the Third International a resolution adopted on July 1, 1923, speaks of "The Marxian viewpoint, an essential part of which is atheism." This is not to be wondered at when we remember the religious conditions which prevailed in Czarist Russia.

We appreciate the deep, mystical religious consciousness of the Russian people, their unique capacity for suffering and sacrifice, and the sublime elements of worth in the Orthodox Church once it is reformed. But when it is remembered how

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some of Russia's present leaders suffered at the hands of the Church as well as of the State, and what a caricature of religion was often presented to them in the superstition, hypocrisy and corruption in the Church, typified at its worst by such men as Rasputin, their rejection of the only religion they knew is not so much to be wondered at as their measure of toleration. They have, however, been merciless to those whom they believed were guilty of counter-revolutionary plotting and meddling in politics.

Thus as a warning Russia furnishes the first avowedly atheistic government in history which has given promise of permanence. While granting liberty of conscience and worship, the Communists are frankly aiming as far as possible to root out of the rising generation all religion, which they regard as sheer superstition. Religion is on trial in Russia, Religious formalism, oppression, tyranny, priest-craft, political espionage, meddling in politics, hypocrisy, bogus relics and sham have been mercilessly condemned. Along with deep devotion and mysticism these evils all existed in the old Russia and they must perish. Nothing but truth and reality, nothing but the most vital moral and spiritual dynamic, as ready to suffer for its faith as were the Bolshevik revolutionists in the dungeons of the Czar and the wastes of Siberian exile, can meet the ordeal which religion must face in Russia today.

The fundamental instincts of human nature, hunger and love, both in the material and spiritual realm, cannot be crushed and conquered either by capitalism or Communism. Both systems in their worst applications have outraged the free spirit of man. But man survived the enthroning of a painted Goddess of Reason in the enduring cathedral of Notre Dame, the red terror of the guillotine, and the militarism and sordid vanity of the Corsican butcher who made a caricature of the French Revolution. France still bears the scars of the evils of that period. Yet the great ideals of liberty, equality and fraternity lived on in a freer Europe despite the wild license and debasing mixture of good and evil in the movement.

In the light of the experience of Russia which constitutes a warning to other nations, we do not believe that State Capitalism, State Socialism or Military Communism furnish any panacea for the evils of our present system. We do not

believe in the Bolshevist theory of life for the reasons already stated—its class war and dictatorship, its fundamental denial of liberty, its state control of life, its lowering of standards in higher education, its lack of moral and spiritual standards and its anti-religious policy.

In spite of all its own defects, however, we must also observe wherein this nation constitutes a challenge.¹

¹ Woodrow Wilson broke the silence of his retirement to warn the nation in the August *Atlantic* on "The Road Away From Revolution." He says, "There must be some real ground for the universal unrest and perturbation. * * * It probably lies deep in the sources of the spiritual life of our time. It leads to revolution; and perhaps if we take the case of the Russian Revolution, the outstanding event of its kind in our age, we may find a good deal of instruction for our judgment of present critical situations and circumstances.

"What gave rise to the Russian Revolution? The answer can only be that it was the product of a whole social system. * * * It was due to the systematic denial to the great body of Russians of the rights and privileges which all normal men desire. * * * It is against capitalism under one name or another that the discontented classes everywhere draw their indictment. * * * Great and widespread reactions like that which is now unquestionably manifesting itself against capitalism do not occur without cause or provocation. * * *

"Democracy has not yet made the world safe against irrational revolution. That supreme task, which is nothing less than the salvation of civilization, now faces democracy, insistent, imperative. * * * The road that leads away from revolution is clearly marked. * * *

"The sum of the whole matter is this, that our civilization cannot survive materially unless it be redeemed spiritually. It can be saved only by becoming permeated with the spirit of Christ and being made free and happy by the practices which spring out of that spirit. Only thus can discontent be driven out and all the shadows lifted from the road ahead. Here is the final challenge to our churches, to our political organizations, and to our capitalists—to everyone who fears God or loves his country. Shall we not all earnestly coöperate to bring in the new day?"

RUSSIA A CHALLENGE

1. There are elements of value in the dynamic *ideal* that lies at the heart of their purpose, "to suppress all exploitation of man by man," abolish all parasitic elements in society; abolish all secret treaties; free from enslavement millions of laborers in Asia, the colonies and smaller nations; obtain self-determination for oppressed nationalities; liberty of conscience, full liberty of association; a complete education free for all, and the ultimate equality of all citizens regardless of race and nationality. They aim "to end the domination of capitalism, make war impossible, wipe out state boundaries, transform the whole world into a co-operative commonwealth, and bring about real human brotherhood and freedom."¹ We do not claim that Russia has fulfilled its ideal, nor carried out the pledges of its Constitution. But, consciously or unconsciously, there are many Christian elements in their purpose and ideal of brotherhood.

2. Here is the first *labor government* in the world, on such a scale, planned and executed for the benefit of the laboring masses. Though still hampered for lack of funds, and unable to carry out all the provisions of their legislation, perhaps no other country has such favorable labor laws and such methods for the assistance and benefit of the majority of the population that make up the toiling masses, especially of the industrial workers.

3. They have made *provision for art*, music and the whole aesthetic side of life; for athletics, sports and recreation for the development and expression of the working masses as no other government in the world has done.

4. Russia has more completely realized an *industrial revolution* than any other country. For five thousand years,

¹ From the Manifesto of the Third Moscow International, and Declaration of Rights of the Third All-Russian Soviet Congress.

The communism found in the early Christian Church was spiritual and voluntary in a small homogeneous and prepared community, while that in Russia is materialistic and enforced in a vast heterogeneous empire. In Acts II: 44-46 and IV: 32-35 we read: "The believers all kept together; they shared all they had with one another, they would sell their possessions and goods and distribute the proceeds among all, as any one might be in need. Day after day they resorted with one accord to the temple and broke bread together in their own homes; they ate with a glad and simple heart. . . . Now there was but one heart and soul among the multitude of the believers; not one of them considered anything his personal property; they shared all they had with one another. There was not a needy person among them, for those who owned land or houses would sell them and bring the proceeds of the sale, laying the money before the feet of the apostles; it was then distributed according to each individual's need." Moffatt's Translation.

since the construction of the great Pyramid in Egypt, most nations have been exploited in the interests of a privileged minority. Russia is the first country to be exploited for the unprivileged masses. Thus Russia constitutes an *economic and industrial challenge*, wherever capitalism is ruthless. In referring to "ruthless capitalism" we fully recognize the legitimate and necessary accumulation of capital without which modern industry cannot be conducted. What we mean by ruthless capitalism is the excessive concentration of power and privilege as a result of vast wealth in the hands of a few; monopoly of natural resources for private gain at the expense of public welfare; autocratic control of industry; production for individual profit and power rather than for social use and service, with consequent extravagant luxury for some while many live in poverty and want. In spite of all its own evils Russia openly challenges the whole present capitalistic order with its vast concentration of wealth and poverty, of profiteering and sweating.

5. Russia also constitutes a *social challenge*, for she has attempted the first actual establishment of a *new social order* based on the boldest social experiment known in history, national and international Communism. From Plato onward we have read of Utopias and theories for a new social order. Russia is the first country that has ever attempted on a national scale to carry out such a colossal experiment.

6. In spite of her own glaring evils and shortcomings Russia stands as a *political challenge* to every country and every future international conference; a challenge to all imperialism, militarism and colonial conquest and exploitation. She has immediate and powerful influence on the present situation in Turkey, Poland, Germany and much of Europe and Asia. Henceforth Russia must be reckoned with.

We may look upon Russia as a *vast laboratory for social experiment*. In a world fettered and bound by conservative custom and tradition, with its incubus and inheritance of medievalism and absolutism, its uncorrected results of a *laissez-faire* industrial revolution, its enormous injustices and inequalities, its masses often in poverty and ignorance, without adequate opportunity for expression or self-realization, it may be of some real value to have at least one country free to test certain theories by a system of trial and error. In so far as they are fit to survive they will eventually succeed, but where they are false they will finally fail. If we

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have open minds we shall learn much both from the success and failure of the good and the evil in Russia.

The significance of Russia is enhanced by its very mass and magnitude. Midway between East and West, the Russian Empire at the opening of the war contained more than one-seventh of the land surface of the globe and about one-ninth of its population.¹ Stretching for over six thousand miles across Asia and Europe, it was approximately twice the size of all the rest of Europe. Siberia alone with its vast resources has an area one and a half times that of the United States, and if peopled with the same density of population as Belgium, would hold almost twice the present population of the world. When a state with such resources and with the largest white population in the world tries the boldest social experiment in all history, it must be reckoned with. At least we shall not solve the problem by telling lies about the present government such as the ridiculous statement that all women had been nationalized, or other baseless propaganda, furnished by members of the old order dispossessed of their privileges under the Czar, or other interested parties, determined that a workingman's government should not succeed.

¹

Area in Square Miles.....	1915	1923
	8,417,118	8,166,130
Population (estimated).....	182,182,600	131,546,045

Large sections of the population were lost to Poland, Finland, Latvia, Esthonia, Lithuania, etc. Statesman's Year Book, 1923, p. 1278.

RUSSIA'S PAST

The significance of the present movement in Russia can only be adequately understood in the light of its past history. Russia has been marked for suffering for a thousand years. It has been the land of autocracy and revolution. Between the eighth and thirteenth centuries the land was laid waste by eighty-three civil wars. For the next two centuries (1238-1467 A. D.) it was swept by invasion under the galling Tartar or Mongol domination; it was rent by ninety internal conflicts and more than a hundred and fifty foreign wars.

Then for five centuries Russia suffered under the autocracy of the Czars. Ivan the Terrible began a reign of terror which lasted for twenty-five years. Before the last feeble Czar, Nicholas II, came to the throne in 1894, for two decades some thousands of victims each year had been sent to Siberia. The government of the last Czar had also banished thousands of political exiles.

We stood in Petrograd in the dark fortress of Peter and Paul between the tombs of the dead Czars on the one hand, and the cells of their former political prisoners on the other. For centuries the finest spirits in Russia had cherished their dream of a new social order. They had lived for it, suffered for it in dungeon and exile, thousands had died for it. They had dreamed of a country that should be free of police and spies, free from the caricature of religion in a State Church that had become almost an adjunct of the police department and of the spy system, free from the exploiter and profiteer, from all autocracy, aristocracy and plutocracy. They had dreamed of world brotherhood, of communal well-being in mutual service without the motive of private profit and selfish hoarding.

We stood in the Revolutionary Museum in the Czar's Winter Palace in Petrograd, where one sees the portrayal of the long century of struggle for freedom, from the revolution of 1825 to the present. A blind bureaucracy had opposed all reformers, suppressed the conquered nationalities, dissolved or treated with contempt the Duma and legislative assemblies, outlawed trade unions and had put down peasant revolts and industrial strikes with bloodshed. The spy system and secret police both in state and church developed into "a vast secret society which permeated and

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poisoned the whole of Russian social life." This was the stern school of autocracy and oppression in which the present rulers of Russia studied. And this must be remembered in judging the present government. Most of the evils of the present system were found in the old Czarist régime which our government officially recognized.

In the World War Russia suffered more than any other great nation. Of over 15,000,000 called to the colors, 1,700,000 fell among the battle dead, and a total of over 3,000,000 died of wounds, disease, neglect and starvation. Betrayed by their corrupt leaders, left often without munitions and supplies to fight with sticks and stones, the morale of the troops at the front was finally broken, and the hungry mobs in Petrograd rose in bread riots, only to be shot down by the soldiers. In all the terrible events that followed in the downfall of Russia the malign influence of Germany must be fully recognized.

THE REVOLUTION

It is said that every country gets the kind of revolution it deserves. On March 12, 1917, the first revolution broke out in Russia, beginning with a strike of the industrial workers threatened with starvation. Regiments sent to crush the revolt joined the strikers; and the Czar, Nicholas II, finally abdicated. A provisional government under Prince Lvoff was followed by a new cabinet under Kerensky, but neither satisfied the demands of the people. Liberty had given place to license, discipline was at an end, chaos reigned. The peasants wanted land, the industrial workers demanded control of the factories, there were constant demonstrations and threatened uprisings, while the central government was weak and nerveless. Russia was on the verge of breaking up into rival revolutionary states in endless civil war. One party alone now emerged that knew just what it wanted and had the power to enforce its demands.¹

During the war, councils or soviets of workers were formed in the factories, of peasants in the country, and soldiers in the army. As the peasants had not been given the land nor the town workers bread, a popular revolt began. This second Russian Workers' Revolution took place on November 7, 1917. As soon as the Petrograd Soviet obtained a Bolshevik majority they seized the Government and handed it over to the All-Russia Congress of Soviets. The Czarist Empire had now become the "Russian Socialist Federal Soviet Republic."²

The Bolshevik Government withdrew from what they regarded as an imperialist war and signed the separate and humiliating peace of Brest-Litovsk. They then endeavored to make the colossal transition from a capitalist to a socialist order. Two series of decrees were now issued, one aiming at the destruction of the old order and the other at the establishment of the new through the improvement of the social conditions of the people. A Declaration of Rights

¹ There had been three principal revolutionary groups in Russia, the Communist followers of Marx, the Anarchist followers of Bakunin and Prince Kropotkin, and the Socialist Revolutionaries, one wing of which pursued the policy of terrorism. The first group organized the Marxian Social Democratic Labor Party in 1898 among the town workers. In the division which arose in the party the Mensheviks favored co-operation with the bourgeois Liberals, while the Bolsheviks under Lenine favored the dictatorship of the proletarian workers on their own account.

² At the Tenth All-Russian Congress of Soviets, December 23-27, 1922, it was decided to unite all the Soviet Republics in a single federal state. The present official name is the Union of Socialist Soviet Republics or the S. S. S. R.

was passed at the Third All-Russia Soviet Congress and a Constitution was adopted at the fifth Congress. Russia became a Republic of Soviets of Workers, Soldiers and Peasants. Private property in land was abolished, all land becoming, in theory at least, the common property of the people. The State declared its ownership of all forests, mines, national resources, factories, railways and other means of production and transport.

The Republic became a free Socialist community of all laboring classes. Freedom of conscience, of opinion, of the press and of meeting were guaranteed. The franchise was granted irrespective of religion, nationality or sex to all citizens over eighteen engaged in productive labor; it was denied to all who exploited the labor of others for profit, or lived on unearned income, also to monks, priests, members of the former police and criminals. It cannot be maintained that all of the above ideals or guarantees were carried into practice. Religious liberty, for instance, was hedged about with many restrictions. Russia is the only country which the writer has visited in thirty years where no Student Christian Movement is as yet permitted.

The Bolshevik Revolution was accomplished with remarkably little bloodshed and employees and men of all classes were invited to co-operate with the new government. With the beginning of the destruction of the old capitalist régime and the erection of a new social order, almost the entire bourgeois, professional and technically skilled class went on strike, adopted the method of sabotage, and organized a counter-revolutionary movement with the aid of foreign powers. Fighting now for their very existence and the principles of the revolution, the government replied by the Extraordinary Commission and the terror, which, however, was abolished as soon as counter-revolutionary activity ceased. We make no defence of this terror, any more than we do of that of the French Revolution. Its severity can hardly be exaggerated.

MILITARY COMMUNISM

For three years private shops were closed and there was almost no buying and selling. A period of "military communism" was instituted in which the state tried to organize the whole life of the people on a communal basis. The peasants' entire surplus grain was taken by the state for the support of the army, the industrial workers and the rest of the population.

Private property and trade were now to be replaced by the free exchange of the products of industry for food from the country. But when industry ceased effectively to produce, the burden of the support of the population fell upon the peasants, who had all their surplus crops taken from them. To eliminate the money power of the bourgeoisie, paper currency was deliberately debased by a flood of paper money which soon became worthless and which the peasants were unwilling to receive. Peasant uprisings began to increase and the area cultivated was reduced to half what it had been before the war.

Resenting this forcible seizure of their grain, the peasants ceased to raise more than they needed for themselves and the government was now compelled to face a world of enemies from without and within the country. For six years they were forced to meet obstacles and opposition unparalleled in history. They had inherited the corruption of five centuries of Czardom. The country was exhausted by the war and impoverished by a world blockade. It was crushed by Germany in the Brest-Litovsk Treaty. It suffered from invasion, as it had to fight against the Central Powers, the English, French, Japanese, Czecho-Slovaks, Poles, Finns, Greeks, and Roumanians. Even an American army invaded their territory.

The white armies of Denikin, Kolchak, Yudenich, Krasnoff, Semenoff, Wrangel, Petlura, Balakhovitch and the Cossacks were not only fighting but some of them were perpetrating atrocities upon the helpless inhabitants equal to anything in history. Under the White Terror in Finland alone out of a small population of 3,000,000 some 17,000 are said to have perished. In the meantime Russia was devastated by red and white terror alike.

After six years of warfare following 1914, Russia collapsed in sheer exhaustion. She was devastated by war

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and revolution, swept by vast epidemics, bankrupt and threatened with chaos. Following all this came the awful famine of 1921. The American Relief Administration reported 23,895,000 starving out of a population of 42,000,000 in the famine area.¹ Reliable witnesses informed the writer that frozen corpses, dogs and even children were eaten by persons frenzied by hunger. Some three millions are said to have perished of starvation and a total of not less than ten millions from all causes of war, revolution, famine and disease.

In the face of such titanic obstacles the policy of military communism broke down. Russia had attempted to pass at a bound from primitive agriculture and a disorganized industrial system to State Socialism and Communism. This was impossible. The new state had destroyed its credit. With the abolition of private wealth there was almost nothing left to tax, for state industries were running at a loss. A flood of paper money to pay the government's bills ruined the currency. The workers were for a time demoralized by the new license. Even school children had their committees for running the schools, as the soldiers tried to run the army and the workers the factories. But all reserves were soon exhausted, and the state could not even provide adequate food rations to keep the workers from hunger. The period of destruction was at an end.

¹The A. R. A. reported nearly 15,000,000 fed, 12,000 medical institutions assisted, 7,000,000 persons inoculated or vaccinated, 912,121 tons of food imported, and a total expenditure of some \$75,000,000. The work of the A. R. A. was beyond all praise and has left an enduring gratitude in the hearts of the Russian people that will have an important influence upon the future relations of these two great nations.

THE NEW ECONOMIC POLICY

The Communist leaders received the shock of a rude awakening when there was a peasant uprising in the province of Tambov, and the fortress of Cronstadt revolted. Production in industry had fallen to a desperate fraction of the pre-war basis and of the national needs.¹

The government had failed and confessed it.² Lenine and his colleagues had the sagacity to see it in time, frankly admit their failure, and turn right about face, in the adoption of "The New Economic Policy."

The new economic policy embraced: 1. The substitution for the requisition of all the peasants' surplus grain by a definite food tax, taking a maximum of 20 per cent of his crop. 2. Freedom of trade within Russia. 3. The denationalization of small business, the revival of private small capitalist production, and of banks and shops on a profit-making basis. Also the leasing of the majority of state-controlled enterprises. 4. The concentration of state control to the more important nationalized industries, and their combination in autonomous state "trusts" under the Supreme Economic Council. 5. The institution of a State Bank and the encouragement of the Co-operative Societies which had been temporarily absorbed by the state.³

¹Larin, the Communist economist, contrasted the production of 1920 with 1914 as follows: The production of coal had declined 75 per cent, petroleum 67, gold 88, cast iron 97.6, iron and steel 96, cotton and wool 80, rubber 98 and chemicals 89.6 per cent.

²See *Izvestia*, August 11, 1921. Lenine frankly said: "We can only continue to exist by making an appeal to the peasants . . . The rôle of the proletariat in such a situation is to supervise and guide these small farmers in their transition to socialized, collective, communal labor . . . Ten years at least, and, in view of our present ruin, probably more will be required for this transition . . . We must decide which of two policies we shall choose. Either we forbid absolutely every private exchange of goods or we take the trouble to make it a state capitalism . . . State capitalism is a step forward toward the destruction of the small bourgeois attitude . . . The kernel of the situation is that one must find a means of directing the evolution of capitalism in the bed of state capitalism so as to insure the transition of state capitalism into Socialism."

³See *Statesman's Year Book* 1923, p. 1286. The sweeping changes in the policy and laws of Soviet Russia are shown by the following: November 14, 1917, Decree giving Workers' Committees complete control of all industries; May, 1921, Law repealed, individual management restored; November 24, 1917, Decree abolishing all existing courts and legal institutions, Extraordinary Commission or Cheka established; January, 1922, New system of courts established, Cheka abolished; December 14, 1917, all banks closed, nationalized and assets confiscated; December, 1921, new bank law passed and State Bank with branches established; August 20, 1918, nationalization of land, prohibiting private ownership of real estate; June 1, 1922, Decree passed giving perpetual right to possession and right to inherit same; June 29, 1918, all industries nationalized; June, 1922, many smaller industries surrendered. Owners given preference in leasing others on long-time leases, 50 to 100 years, etc.

Ex-Governor Goodrich, of Indiana, "The Evolution of Soviet Russia," p. 223.

It is only fair to say that the "new" economic policy was in fact a frank retreat, and in part a return to the old methods of capitalism which had been so condemned. The government has not, however, abandoned its ideal and aim. The present policy is only a temporary concession. Their plan is State Capitalism now, State Socialism as soon as possible, and ultimately pure Communism that proposes to obviate state control.

History proves, however, that once this ground is surrendered it will be difficult to recover. In Rome under the Republic and the Empire no citizen ever held title to his land as a personal possession. Under English law all the land theoretically belongs to the crown, but this is now a mere fiction and it would be fatal to try and reclaim it. When the peasants of Russia have long possessed the land, when private industry has been re-established, when leases have been made to private capitalists and concessions granted to foreign governments for recognition, when Russia comes again into the family of nations with the constant influence and pressure of the rest of the world upon her, it will be difficult if not impossible for one nation to live under an economy of pure communism if all the rest of the world is upon a basis of unrestricted capitalism.

In the meantime, the Soviet Government maintains an almost absolute political and economic control. It retains the monopoly of foreign trade, the control of basic industries, the railways, the banking system and of most property. A new capitalist class is again springing up under the present system of private trading.

In spite of all its concessions, the new economic policy, while it has succeeded superficially in stimulating trade upon the surface, has not as yet restored production to its pre-war level nor attracted a large amount of capital, either foreign or domestic. Within Russia there is not much private capital left to attract. Its pre-war estimated wealth of only \$40,000,000,000 has been reduced to little more than half. Russia's greatest economic needs at the moment are capital, credit and confidence, but she is slowly gaining ground in all three.

THE PRESENT GOVERNMENT

As we have seen, the present government of Russia is a frankly imposed dictatorship. It does not profess to be a democracy for all. Theoretically it is a "Government of Workmen and Peasants," but as the peasants are unprepared and unwieldy, highly individualistic instead of socialistic, Zinoviev well says a "government of workmen and peasants is not realizable. . . . The Soviet government is in fact a *workmen's* government." That is, it is a dictatorship of the proletariat. But as the proletariat is for the most part ignorant and uninstructed, and often dissatisfied with its low wages, the dictatorship has to be in fact one of the Communist Party of less than half a million members, or a third of one per cent of the population. As this party in turn is liable to get out of hand, and as it needs a directing brain and the control of an "iron discipline," there must be a nucleus, an inner group or guiding center. This is found in the Political Bureau of the Communist Party. Here is the invisible government and the directing mind and will of the whole machine. It is composed of seven men, with three associates. Here is the motor brain center of the whole body which determines the general policy and program of the party and makes the more important assignments of positions.

This invisible government functions through the Communist Party. The Communists are distributed in strategic positions everywhere and aim to have a party "cell" in all political and industrial organizations. Before every meeting the Communists hold a private caucus. The questions at issue are fully discussed and a vote is taken. The decision of the majority is binding and under an iron party discipline the Communist members enter the public meeting to vote, speak and act as a unit. As they are the one body that knows just what it wants, as they have thought through the questions at issue, and as their dominant purpose is usually the workers' welfare, they generally carry the meeting, especially as voting must be "open" and as opposition in the past has been known to be dangerous.

Professor Harper, of Chicago University, in the *International Interpreter* states that although there are not enough Communists to go around, they constitute a vast bureaucracy. They control, all the more effectively because not always obviously, not only the central, provincial and local government

bodies, but the principal trade unions, the central Coöperative Society, the red army of some 600,000, the directorate of the more important industrial enterprises, the entire press, 83 per cent of the provincial judges, the prosecuting attorneys—in short, everything that is worth controlling in the cities. In the last All-Russian Congress of Soviets there were 1,154 Communists and only 63 “non-party” men out of a total of 1,217 delegates. They continue to rule by a combination of force and sagacity. They are masters of propaganda, publicity and diplomacy. The peasants are their unsolved problem. The 110,853,734 rural inhabitants are too numerous, too widely scattered, and, since the war, too sturdy and independent to be thus tamely and paternally controlled. The final issue in Russia may be between the industrial Communist Party and a peasants’ republic.

The Communist Party rules through the Soviet system. A soviet is simply a committee or council. Every body has its soviet. Each trade and profession, all workers by hand or brain, whether mechanics, teachers or lawyers; all soldiers, workmen and peasants; each factory, village, town, city, province or republic has its representative committee or soviet. This system may be truly democratic and representative, or it may be paternally controlled. It is in accord with the democratic genius of the Russian people and will doubtless be permanent in Russia whether the Communist Party continues to dominate a socialist state, or whether it is finally overthrown by a peasant republic, or is democratically modified in that direction, which now seems more probable.

According to the new Soviet Constitution the Communist Party operates through the Soviet system as follows: There is at the top (save for the invisible government of the Political Bureau of the Communist Party which must never be forgotten) a visible cabinet of some 21 members, called the Presidium of the Executive Committee. This body can bring anyone to trial, or veto action of any local or state parliament. Next, there is the Executive Committee, which is really a parliament of three or four hundred members, composed of two houses. The senate or upper house is the Council of Nationalities composed of five men from each state of the S. S. R., or Union of Soviet Republics. There is also a lower house elected according to states. These two bodies each elect seven members to the Presidium, and seven others are chosen by coöption.

Subject to the Executive Committee, or Parliament, are

some sixteen Commissariats, or government departments, or ministries, such as Defence, Foreign Affairs, Foreign Trade, Posts and Telegraphs, the Police or "G. P. U.," which is under the legal department as a regular, and very important, department of state.

Each state or republic has its own parliament, is supposed to be independent, and, theoretically, can leave or secede when it wishes. As a matter of fact, Russia is a highly centralized paternal state. It is neither a democracy nor an autocracy, but an oligarchy, practically controlled by a small group. Lenine has long been the head of the Council of Commissars and Kalinin the President of the Central Executive Committee. Lenine has broken down physically and his work is finished. Though greatly revered, he is hardly missed, for Russia is not, and never has been, a one-man government. The men who dominate the movement at present are Trotsky, Kamenev, Zenoviev and Stalin, who is often a spokesman for the party.

Stalin thus defines the system, "The governmental authority is the mass apparatus uniting the working class, which is in power in the person of its party, with the peasantry, thus making it possible for the working class, in the person of its party, to direct the peasantry."¹ The highly centralized groups of the party have a "monopoly of legality" and control the 530 newspapers with their very limited circulation. The whole system provides for wide representation and freedom of discussion, with highly centralized effective control by experts. But "the party" permits no effective opposition nor democratic control. This is at once its strength and weakness. There is but one party. It has been sustained thus far by the enthusiasm of the revolutionary psychology, by rigid discipline and where necessary by the use of force.

The Cheka, or secret tribunal of the period of the terror, has been replaced by the state political department with reduced powers. As the government has become more secure, it has relaxed its more oppressive control, yet in July, 1923, it extended its criminal-code to include under counter-revolutionary activity all "attempts to overthrow, undermine or weaken" the authority of the government.

According to the statement of Trotsky to the Twelfth Congress of the Communist Party in April, 1923, the hopes of the government are based upon four elements: 1, The dic-

¹ Quoted by Prof. S. N. Harper in the *International Interpreter*, November 3, 1923.

tatorship of the Communist Party; 2, the red army; 3, the nationalization of production; 4, the monopoly of foreign trade. To these might be added their recruiting from the candidates in the Young Communist Party. Thus Lunacharsky, Commissar of Education, says, "The Communist Youth is ours . . . to drive its class enemy out of the schools, proletarianizing the higher and secondary schools."

It is in the light, not of its profession of words and phrases but of its practice that the system must be judged. It aims at "brotherhood," but its conception is a whole spiritual world removed from that of an all-inclusive human brotherhood, in the light of a divine Fatherhood, bound together by the universal law of love, including even enemies, which Jesus taught. According to Lenine the class war must be a civil war and "revolution is unthinkable without force and violence." According to Joffe, lying to the class enemy is a proletarian virtue. We have thus a "brotherhood" of workmen based upon a hatred of capitalists; a brotherhood which counts it a duty to hate and to kill its class enemy. The word "love" was absent from the vocabulary which the writer heard in Russia.¹

² Russia constitutes a warning and a challenge to every country that permits class, racial and religious hatred to prepare the ground for a class war. The class war was no outdoor sport in Russia. Several hundred thousand have perished there in the red and the white terror. In the face of such an example, how pathetic it is to see a class war begun on the free soil of America by the secret order of the Ku Klux Klan. This nation conceived in liberty and dedicated to the proposition that *all* men are created free and equal, now witnesses the sad spectacle of Protestant Americans appealing to racial and religious hatred by sordid propaganda against the Jew, against the Catholic, against the Negro, against the foreigner, and against the liberal. Many of those who belong to this "invisible empire" are earnest and well meaning just as many were who took part in the Inquisition, the burning of witches, slavery and other evils that have afflicted humanity. But however well meaning, if persisted in it will send our free and united commonwealth into the jealous factions of a class war. Russia stands as a warning where this may lead.

RUSSIAN INDUSTRY

The writer spent most of his time in Russia investigating labor conditions, visiting factories, interviewing officials, trade union leaders and representatives of the public concerning industrial problems.

Apart from the independent republics, Russia has but 7,785 factories with 1,744,000 workers, or little more than Japan or India. According to official figures there were 1,180,000 less industrial workers in 1923 than in 1913.

Trotsky in his report to the Twelfth Congress of the Communist Party in 1923 stated that the total income from industry and agriculture in 1922 was only 60 per cent of what it was in 1913. While the agricultural income was approximately two-thirds of the pre-war standard, that from industry had fallen from \$2,200,000,000 in 1913 to \$650,000,000 in 1922, or less than one-third of its pre-war value.

The gold value of the money in circulation is approximately only one-tenth what it was before the war. Russia's chief resources lie in grain, timber, coal, iron, oil, gold, platinum, manganese, flax and cotton.¹ In all of these, production has fallen off greatly. Compared to the pre-war standard of 1913, Russia's production in 1922, according to the most reliable statistics obtainable, was as follows: Oil, 49 per cent, salt 36, coal 34, electro-technical supplies 26, wool 27, chemicals 21, matches 20, paper 17, sugar 12, glass 9, platinum 15, gold 7, brass 3.5, steel 7.4, pig iron 3.9, iron ore 2.2, plows and reapers 6, railway carriages only 4 per cent of pre-war production.

It must be remembered that Russia is still a primitive agricultural country, more than a century behind Western Europe in its cultural standards, and that only in recent decades had it witnessed the beginning of an industrial revolution and the development of its wealth.

In visiting Russian factories we selected first certain nationalized rubber works in Petrograd and Moscow. The total production of each factory was about one-third of its pre-war output. The individual worker, owing to the disorganization of industry, produces from 50 to 60 per cent

¹ Before the War Russia stood sixth among the nations of the world in the production of coal, second in petroleum, fourth in iron, and provided nine-tenths of the world's supply of platinum. Russia took first place in the production of rye, second in wheat and oats, and third in the number of cattle, and second in her railway system of 42,504 miles. Russia is a land of raw products and vast potential wealth.

of what he did before the war. In one factory the workers had been reduced from 18,000 to 8,000. Industry as a whole has been constitutionalized and each factory had its printed constitution or standard contract sent from Moscow, and worked upon the basis of a signed agreement between the government "Trust" of the industry on the one hand and the workers' trade union on the other.

There was a thorough organization both of workers and management under a government constitution with elaborate provision for the settlement of disputes and conflicts. There was a local trade union committee in each factory; a conflict committee composed of half workers and half management; a district council to which appeal could be made, and final arrangement for arbitration. Practically all disagreements were settled before reaching the stage of strikes, which, however, were not forbidden as a last resort.

The management and technical staff were men of the old régime working loyally with the new order. Labor showed a will to work; there was evidence of discipline and of deference paid to the management on the part of the workers. Labor's interference with management and the workers' control of two years before had almost entirely ceased.

The wages of the workers, which were chiefly on a piece-work basis, ran from \$6.50 to \$45.00 a month in Petrograd, and from \$10.00 to \$50.00 in Moscow. Highly skilled workers received about a dollar a day. The working day had been reduced from 10 hours before the war to 8 hours. Conditions for the workers in the factories were excellent.

Approximately 28 per cent of the wage bill of each factory was set aside for social insurance for the workers. There were so many taxes and restrictions that at present there was no indication that the factories were making a profit for the state. The cost of the product was about double that of pre-war days, the cost of living was also doubled, the real wages of the workers were less, and the profit of the factory had disappeared. Too many cooks tended to spoil the broth. The moral standards of the workers were not high. Throughout the factories we noticed signs, "Discharge for Theft," and observed that we ourselves and all workers were searched on leaving the factory to see if we had any stolen goods upon us. In the state flour mills employees stole so much of the flour that profits vanished and some were offered to their former owners or to private capitalists. This may be attributed to long-continued poverty, a period of lawless-

ness, and to the confessed materialism and dictatorship of the present régime.

Nevertheless, in production, in method and in relationships, conditions were steadily if slowly improving everywhere. Two years ago nearly all writers like H. G. Wells and Sokoloff were speaking of industry as being "rapidly ruined" and of impending disaster. There is evidence now of progressive adjustment and adaptation and the promise of stable and permanent success in industry.

In textile factories we found wages running from approximately \$4.00 to \$30.00 a month, or from seventeen cents to a dollar a day. We met one director receiving \$1.25 a day. The real wages of the workers were about 65 per cent of the pre-war standard. Production in the individual factory had fallen off from 10 to 20 per cent of the pre-war level but was much better than two years ago. In the textile industry as a whole, however, production is scarcely a fifth of what it was in 1913.

The average wage for all Russia for an unskilled worker in 1916 was, according to Stroumiline, \$141.60 a year, or \$11.75 a month; it was only \$77.50 a year, or \$6.41 a month, in 1923, in spite of the high cost of living. This means an average of about 25 cents a day.

Concerning the settlement of labor disagreements we found more disputes and less strikes in Russia than in almost any other industrial country. The right to strike is maintained both in state and private enterprises, but recourse to arbitration is compulsory before a strike can be declared.

In spite of low wages in Russia today the cost of living is much higher than before the war. My first meal in a Moscow hotel with two courses for two persons cost over \$5.00 gold. A pair of shoe laces cost me 65,000,000 rubles. The face value of this before the war would have been a fortune of \$32,500,000, but with rubles at 480,000,000 to the dollar, and falling daily, the cost of the shoe laces in American money was about thirteen cents. My first street car fare was 26,000,000 rubles. For half a large loaf of bread I paid 96,000,000 rubles. A pound of tea costs from \$1.00 to \$4.00, or over 480,000,000 rubles, and a cheap suit of clothes 12,000,000,000.

The writer found much discontent among unskilled and poorly paid workers outside the ranks of the Communist Party. Within this favored group, industry, the govern-

ment, everything is theirs and utopia lies just over the brow of the next hill. The two chief causes of complaint on the part of non-Communists, however, were poor pay and lack of liberty. Voting is not by secret ballot but openly. Anyone is free to oppose if he dares to become a marked man, vote against the policy of the Party and take the consequences. The lowered voice and furtive glance often bore witness to the shadow of the terror that still lingers in the memory. One quiet but fearless worker testified to having been imprisoned four times under the present government and fourteen times in his lifetime, because he dared to stand for his principles.

We met no workingmen in all Russia, however, who, even for increased wages, would be willing to return to the régime of the Czar or of Liberalism after the first revolution. Poor as it is, it remains a workingman's government, in many respects nearer the people than any other in the world. Even among the bourgeoisie I found a growing number who feel that their early sabotage against the government was a great mistake, that their trust in futile British and French intervention had been disastrous and that there is no other possible government in sight that can maintain law and order. They say the whole country is sick of war and revolution, and that they should now loyally co-operate with the government in its present progressive policy and hope for a growing measure of liberty in the future.

The truth is that Russia has never yet known liberty, nor enjoyed a government sure enough of itself and of its principles to allow the free criticism of enlightened public opinion and a free press. The entire press today with all its sources of news and editorial interpretation of events is the controlled mouthpiece of the state. With the increasing stability and confidence of the present government there is a growth of freedom. But no system will ever commend itself to well-paid, well-housed, educated Anglo-Saxon workers who have tasted hard-won liberty, if it can only maintain itself by an iron dictatorship of force, and dare not trust truth to the full blaze of democratic discussion and opposition.

The money of the new system is of three kinds: side by side with the depreciated paper currency there is the stabilized currency upon a gold basis. One paper cher-

vonetz, or ten gold rubles, is worth a little more than an English pound, or a little less than \$5.00. Workmen are frequently paid, however, and wage agreements calculated in the "tovarni," commodity or goods ruble. This is based upon the index figure of fifteen principal articles, and represents, therefore, a real wage which will always purchase the same amount of supplies. At present one tovarni ruble is equivalent to about two gold rubles in Moscow. Thus Russia has already adopted this scientific method of payment, similar to the plan proposed by Professor Irving Fisher of Yale for stabilizing the dollar, which still seems distant and utopian in progressive America.

We found Russia a land of organized labor and trade unions, and they have greater power than in any other country in the world. Representation on the All-Russian Congress of Soviets is in the proportion of one worker to every 25,000 electors in the towns, but only one peasant to every 125,000 from the provinces, thus giving the industrial workers proportionally five times as many delegates as the farmers. It is a workingman's government and country.

This is often indignantly denied by those who claim that it is a government of intellectuals, and that the workers are the mere pawns of this oligarchy, but in the estimation of the writer this is not true. The sources of information and interpretation for most American visitors and readers are the old dispossessed bourgeois class, who are not unprejudiced witnesses. It is true that they have been often cruelly treated. We saw men of this class loyally trying to work with the present government, but who were held under suspicion by it and who were allowed neither employment within Russia nor permission to leave the country. From the point of view of this class alone the present government is indeed cruelly unjust, but from the standpoint of the long-exploited masses, it is a prodigious effort at emancipation and justice. Most of us are too bitter and partisan, too near to the events in question to see the movement in perspective as we now can see the French Revolution. Strangely enough we now view this movement with the same horror and indignation as the royalists of France did the French Revolution, and as the aristocracy of England viewed the rebellion of the ungrateful colonists in America.

Under the autocratic Czarist régime it was illegal to be a

member of a trade union prior to 1905, and free labor organizations and strikes were strictly prohibited. It was the power of repressed organized labor driven underground that finally broke in volcanic upheaval, organized its Soviets and led the revolution for the overthrow of the old order.

In February, 1917, there were only three trade unions in Russia, with a membership of 1,385. Upon gaining their liberty, within six months a thousand labor organizations had enrolled some two million members. In 1923 there were 4,828,000 members, including workers by hand and brain in industry, agriculture, the professions and government employment.¹

The personnel of the Soviet Government is drawn chiefly from the ranks of labor. Within the Communist Party 55 per cent are from the industrial workers, 30 per cent are peasants, and 15 per cent are intellectuals. Although fourteen out of the sixteen Peoples' Commissars of two years ago were professional men or university graduates, yet this class is held under suspicion unless they have been seasoned in prison or enlisted in the cause before the revolution of 1905. The trade unions are an integral part of the machinery of state organization. They have their representatives in nearly all important industrial and political bodies. They have the right to nominate candidates for nearly all important offices in industry or government, in the management of each factory and trust. By the Labor Code of 1922 they are given large powers in fixing wages, working hours and conditions of labor. Where labor demands, as it frequently does, increased wages, shorter hours or better working conditions, labor also, as represented in industrial management and government, must answer the question, Where is the money to come from? As yet there has never been enough to go round, never enough to carry out the reforms for education, social insurance, and increased wages which all desire. The worker in Russia has more power and less wages than in other industrial countries. Thus far he has succeeded in securing favorable labor legislation and industrial and political control, but not in the production of enough "surplus value" to improve his economic condition.

Members of the trade unions are given special privilege in education, in schools for workers to prepare them for the

¹ Labor statistics in this chapter are taken whenever possible from the publications of the All-Russian Central Soviet of Labor Unions, and State Department of Labor translated from the Russian. Numbers 1 to 6, 1923.

universities, to which they must be admitted after a three-year course without examination.

The government has aimed at and achieved a large measure of social equalization. In general, a single standard of living has been established. Apart from a few secret profiteers no gross inequalities of fortune exist, for the reason that all are poor together. Life has been levelled down rather than up. Lenine and the Soviet leaders get a salary not exceeding two dollars a day, with certain allowances and privileges. They are men of simple life, who daily sacrifice for a cause that has for them the force of a religion. But in many respects the early decrees and efforts of the Party to achieve power, privilege and comfort for the working class have failed.

In some cases, such as social insurance, the legislation remains but is still partially ineffective, owing to insufficient funds. In other cases new legislation has withdrawn the privileges granted to the workers which proved harmful or impossible of fulfillment. An example of this is found in workers' control of the factories. This was tried and proved a failure under existing conditions, as it did later in Italy, and as it did in the Russian army when soldiers' committees endeavored to take the place of the officers. It is difficult to conduct an orchestra by a divided committee or soviet; some one has to beat time and be the sole director for the moment.

On November 14, 1917, a Workers' Control Decree gave the workers almost complete supervision of industries, including the purchase and sale of raw materials and manufactures. After disastrous experiences of mismanagement, in May, 1921, the law was repealed, workers' control was abolished, individual management was restored and in some instances former owners were put in charge. On December 28, 1921, the central committee of the Communist Party, in agreement with the All-Russian Central Council of Trade Unions, adopted the following resolution covering large scale industry: "Conditions in Russia unquestionably demand concentration of all power in the hands of the management of the factories. The direct intervention of trade unions in the management of undertakings is also inadmissible."¹

There is now a steady evolutionary development of labor

¹ Labor Conditions in Soviet Russia. International Labor Office, Geneva, pp. 48, 49.

within revolutionary Russia. Forced labor has been abolished. Membership in a trade union is no longer compulsory, but it is almost universal because there are so many advantages of membership and such limitations placed upon "free" labor. Strikes are no longer forbidden as anti-revolutionary. Competition is now resorted to between the state and co-operative and private industries, while scientific management, piece work, special rewards for excellence and many other devices to stimulate production are resorted to.

There is also a growing tendency toward the recognition of certain rights of private property in Russia. In a decree of the All-Russian Central Executive Council in May, 1922, citizens were granted the right to hold property which had not already been municipalized and to transfer it by rental contracts. Private persons can acquire land on a forty-nine-year lease from local authorities and build upon it. Individuals may hold all movable property, including capital, factories, shops and personal property. Security of copyright, inventions and trade-marks were restored. Property may be mortgaged or bequeathed to one's family up to the value of \$5,000. Property expropriated by revolutionary laws was not restored. But with increased intercourse and trade relations conditions in Russia are constantly approximating those of other nations.

An impartial perusal of Labor Legislation in the Labor Code of 1922 reveals the fact that the new Government of Russia in five years has produced a more advanced body of legislation than many other countries in a century.

Almost the first law passed was for an eight-hour day and a forty-eight-hour week, a law which a century after the industrial revolution has never been enacted in Britain or America. Work is limited to 8 hours for day work, 7 for night work and 6 for unhealthy industries. Every worker has the right to a weekly rest of 42 hours, if possible on Sunday. Women are safeguarded from night work, overtime and unhealthy industries. Provision on full wages is made for mothers for 8 weeks before and 8 weeks after confinement. Crèches or homes are provided for the children of workers.

For young persons the normal working day must not exceed 6 hours from 16 to 18 years, and 4 hours for 14 to 16. Children under 14 are not allowed to work. In glaring contrast to the factories in China, Japan, and the backward

states in America, the writer saw no child workers in any factory in Russia.

An elaborate plan of Social Insurance is provided by levying from 12 to 28 per cent of the wage bill upon all industries, state or private. This covers the cost of sickness, accidents, incapacity for work, forced unemployment, confinement for women, old age and burial. "The Russian proletariat has taken as its motto the complete social insurance of salaried workers as well as the poor in the towns and villages." Until industry becomes more profitable, however, and more successful in production, funds are inadequate for the fulfillment of more than a part of this program.

EDUCATION AND RELIGION IN RUSSIA

Russia has not only a new economic policy but a new educational and a new religious policy. Before the war education in Russia had been very backward. Less than 20 per cent of the population was literate. In 1912 there were 68,671 in the universities and colleges, 467,558 in secondary schools, 6,697,385 in elementary schools or a total of only 8,263,999 pupils in 125,723 institutions. The students in higher education were gathered chiefly in nine great university centers. Although their intellectual standards were high, their culture was often borrowed and artificial. The masses were left in profound ignorance, while the students were under suspicion by the authorities for their liberal or revolutionary ideas.

When the Bolshevist government came into power they adopted a new policy of compulsory, free, elementary education. Under the brilliant leadership of M. Lunacharsky, Peoples Commissar for Public Instruction, the latest educational methods were introduced in a four years' system of compulsory primary education. One-sixth of the best pupils were to continue their studies for five years of secondary education. This was to be followed by the university course, where, instead of the former emphasis upon cultural studies, the applied sciences, engineering, and political and social studies of the Marxian school were to be favored.

In order to train a new leadership for government and industry to take the place of the old bourgeoisie a short three years' course in the "workers' faculties" was established. The brightest workers were chosen from the factories, 25 per cent of them from the Communist Party and most of the remainder from the trade unions and various government bodies. Few places were left for the former class of privilege. Bukharin, a leading Communist writer, thus defends their policy of education: "The true basis and meaning of the dictatorship of the proletariat must be a proletarian monopoly of education. This may appear shocking, but the monopoly of education always was and always is the most important privilege of every ruling class. There is nothing else on which a ruling class can base its power. The monopoly of education must become the privilege of the proletariat if the proletariat is to win."

The new policy of education largely broke down because

of lack of funds. Dr. Nansen reports less pupils in elementary schools in 1923 than under the Czar's régime. During this year hardly one-third of the 120,000 students in Russia were receiving government rations, and some had no other means of support. The Student Relief organization has been providing daily meals for some 30,000 students at a cost of about \$1.25 a month per student. Many are in great need. Several Russian professors literally starved to death.

Lunacharsky reported to the Tenth Soviet Congress in December, 1922, that the conditions under which the teachers lived were appalling and that the \$18,000,000 spent on education was only about one-tenth what the schools received before the war. He stated that while builders received 76 per cent of a minimum living wage, teachers received only 12 per cent. On October 7, 1923, Lunacharsky reported that there are less schools in Russia at present than there were in 1914. He states the number of schools and pupils in the various years as follows:

<i>Year</i>	<i>Schools</i>	<i>Pupils</i>
1911	50,000	3,500,000
1914	64,000	4,200,000
1921	70,000	6,000,000
1922	58,000	4,900,000
1923 January	53,000	4,400,000

Russia was converted to Christianity in 988 A. D., adopting the Greek form of worship, and with it the imperial tradition from Byzantium, the second Rome. Moscow in time became a third Rome. The first Romanoff Czar was the son of the Patriarch who was the real ruler of Russia. Then Peter the Great abolished the patriarchate and became, with all succeeding Czars, the head of both Church and State. The Church became not only the chief support of the autocratic State but its subservient tool and most reactionary weapon. The Czar's appointee, the Procurator of the Holy Synod, was often the most sinister influence in political life. The village priest was at times the effective policeman of the Czar, and the confessional was often an agency of espionage. The miracle-working mummies of the saints were found to be merely dried bones or bogus figures of wax or stuffed with cotton. As F. A. Mackenzie says, "The Church was rich, powerful and corrupt and stood

everywhere for reaction. The life in many monasteries was a scandal." It was such a Church that the leaders of the Revolution feared. It had consistently opposed reform under the Czar and under the new government. Many of the priests were involved in counter-revolutionary activity. As Archbishop Evdokim admits, "It is not surprising that the government is suspicious of the Church. During the civil war the heads of the Church worked in open sympathy with the enemies of the republic."

Before the war some eighty millions, or 94 per cent of the population, belonged to the Greek Orthodox Church, some three millions were Roman Catholics, and 1,225,000 were Protestants. There was almost no preaching save a few formal carefully censored sermons.

The attitude of the Communist Party to the Church is shown by Bucharin in the A. B. C. of Communism; "In practice no less than in theory Communism is incompatible with religious faith." He says, "We have a struggle with the Church as a special organization existing for religious propaganda, materially interested in the maintenance of popular ignorance and religious enslavement." . . . "The campaign against the backwardness of the masses in the matter of religion must be conducted with patience and considerateness as well as with energy and perseverance. The credulous crowd is extremely sensitive to anything that hurts religious feeling. To thrust atheism on the masses, to interfere forcibly with religious practices, and to make mock of the objects of popular reverence, would not assist but would rather hinder the campaign against religion."

Yet in spite of Bucharin's words the Young Communist Party by parades and parodies, by cartoons and ridicule, has done all in its power to make a mockery of religion. The Constitution declares that, "for the purpose of securing to the workers real freedom of conscience the Church is to separate from the State, and the school from the Church. Religious and anti-religious propaganda is guaranteed to every citizen." However, "anti-religious propagandists must not interfere with or incite the public against the religious propagandists, and vice versa." Before the war those who were not in the State Church could be expelled from government service, but now, "any legal disabilities connected with the profession of any religion, or none, are abolished."

Prior to 1914 there were 40,000 Church schools with some 1,500,000 pupils, but now, according to the Decree of the

Council of the People's Commissars, "The schools are separate from the Church. The teaching of religious doctrine in all state and public, as well as in private educational institutions in which general subjects are taught is forbidden. Citizens may teach and study religion privately."

Education of the youth of Russia is solely a state function. Religion is not supposed to be taught to persons below the age of 18 years. In the home, from the pulpits of churches and in Protestant Sunday schools, however, such instruction is given. But the Church is forbidden to engage in educational and charitable activities and is thus shorn of much of its cultural and social influence. The Criminal Code declares that: "Imparting religious instruction in State or private educational institutions to children or minors (under 18 years) is punished by forced labor up to one year" (Article 121, Chapter III, Moscow, 1923).

Immediately after the revolution a council was summoned to deal with the abuses of the Church. The council re-established the patriarchate and elected Archbishop Tikhon to that office. After his arrest another council was called in 1922 when many conservative or reactionary Church officials had been placed under arrest or sent to distant parts by the Soviet government.

This council, in which the members of the "Living Church" were the determining factor, abolished the patriarchate, and decided upon a policy of reform. The revolution was accepted as an accomplished fact and the existing government was recognized. The separation of Church and State was approved. The restrictions of celibacy were removed from the higher clergy. The worship of relics was denounced as superstition. The liturgy was revised, and it was decided to replace the old dead language of Slavonic by the living Russian tongue in the Church services. Plans were adopted for the education of the clergy, the restoration of the preaching function of the ministry, and for the application of religion in a program of social justice for the working masses. The social aims of the people's revolution were endorsed but not the anti-religious policy of the Communist Party.

As the Reformed Church of Russia, endeavoring to unite all progressive elements under the leadership of Archbishop Evdokim, the Metropolitan of Moscow, Vedensky, Krasnitsky and M. Lvov, they are seeking a genuine Reformation which the Church sorely needs as in the days of Luther.

The more conservative portion of the Church under Tikhon is also seeking reform somewhat more slowly. The government will doubtless use one against the other in their effort to divide and weaken the religious forces.

The writer saw the Church of St. Pieman which had been confiscated and handed over to the Young Communist Party because the janitor had been making some home brew vodka in the belfry. In place of the altar stood the bust of Karl Marx. Above were the portraits of Lenine and Trotsky. The sacred pictures were whitewashed over and replaced by cartoons. One showed God as an old man with the Virgin Mary and a new born child. Beneath was the comment, "For 1922 years the Virgin Mary gave birth to Christ. In 1923 the Young Communist Party was born." Worse cartoons are exhibited in the magazine "The Atheist" and elsewhere.

When we spoke of our feeling at such a coarse exhibition of vulgarity a leading Communist said regarding their attitude to religion, "Old Church, or Living Church, or any fortune-telling gypsy on the street, they are all the same to us, and we mean by all the means in our power, yet without the persecution to which we ourselves were subjected, to root out what you regard as religion and what we regard as sheer superstition."

Doubtless the government believed it had evidence of counter-revolutionary activity of many of the bishops and priests who were shot, including the Roman Catholic Father Butchkawitch and the beloved Archbishop Benjamin, Metropolitan of Petrograd. But these anti-religious activities of the Communists have done more to outrage and estrange public opinion and defer the recognition of the government than any other thing. Being stern realists themselves and accustomed to look with contempt upon the whole sordid world of "capitalism," which in their view cares for nothing but profit, they have greatly underrated these imponderable moral forces which count for so much with other nations.

We repeat our earnest hope that just as the present government had the good sense to adopt a new economic policy, that so they may also have the wisdom to devise a new religious policy which will place them more in line with the sensibilities of the civilized world.

THE FINAL CHALLENGE

Vividly the writer recalls a scene recently witnessed in Moscow. Just at the entrance to the Kremlin, which is the heart of Russia, the home of the Czars, the historic citadel of church and state, there stands the most sacred shrine in all the Russias, that of the Iberian Virgin. Worshippers from all parts of the land, simple peasants and devout women, night and day stand praying at this shrine, seeking its traditional blessings of healing. Just beside it, on the wall facing this chapel, the revolutionists placed without comment the familiar inscription from Karl Marx, "Religion the opium of the people."

This shrine and this inscription represent the two forces that are today contending for Russia and the world—God and mammon, the spiritual and the carnal, vital religion and materialistic atheism, Love and Hate.

Let us make no mistake about the forces behind these two. Both are powerful. Behind that inscription stands the frank determination of the most enduring party government in Europe today to root out, by all known means without force, that religion which they regard as pure superstition. Behind it are vast masses of labor in many lands, growingly class-conscious, disillusioned—socialist, communist, syndicalist, anarchist, revolutionary or reformist—but prevailingly apathetic or antagonistic to religion.

Behind that shrine, that ikon and image, are—what? The organized churches of the world, Greek, Roman and Protestant. Are they prepared for this struggle? Are they fit to survive just as they are? Observe the superstition of many of these worshippers at this typical shrine, as they pay for their prayers, rely upon these holy relics, bow and cross themselves with touching devotion. The Greek Orthodox Church desperately needs a thorough reformation.

Have we all faced this challenge of Religion as the "opium of the people"? Is there any measure of truth in the assertion? Jesus' way of life was revolutionary, thoroughgoing, transforming. It meant crucifixion, resurrection, a new socialized and spiritualized community that had all things common, not in the prosaic literalism of legal compulsion, but in the communal life dominated by the one master passion of love. They actually did share the life of God and man, of rich and poor, "from each according to his ability, to each according to his need."

But have not our later adaptations and compromises of religion often proved an orthodox opiate and sedative, making us content to worship at the shrine of the known god of things-as-they-are, not a revolutionary challenge to seek the new social order of things-as-they-ought-to-be? For illustration, when the writer was in Japan, he found a common practice of the managers of certain factories of calling in the ministers of religion, usually Buddhist but sometimes Christian, to talk to the workers and keep them contented, in order to increase production.

In one city the keeper of a brothel asked an earnest missionary to talk to the inmates. The missionary accepted the invitation just as he would have done to any prison or other institution of need. The keeper was profuse in his gratitude after the address, providing tea and cake. "But why," asked the missionary, "do you wish me to help these poor creatures while you treat them as you do?" "Oh," said the brothel keeper, "they are getting 'dangerous thoughts' these days, they are no longer contented with their lot." He was quite willing for a personal application of religion for a future life, provided there was no social application to conditions in this; quite willing to have their souls saved provided their bodies were not. This man conceived of religion as an opiate of contentment for the status quo, not a revolutionary challenge to change conditions. The illustration was an extreme case but typical of a common misconception of religion.

After the American colonies had been driven to revolution, King George III issued a proclamation calling a fast throughout the churches of England to atone for the sins of the rebellious colonists. On this occasion scores of sermons were preached by eminent clergymen upholding the divine right of kings, and upbraiding the revolutionists for their disloyalty and ingratitude. To them religion was a respectable convention, a comfortable sedative, a quieting opiate to subdue revolutionary discontent and uphold the vested interests of Church and State.

In 1793, Paley showed to his own satisfaction that there was scarcely any respect in which the poor were not more fortunate than the rich. "Some of the necessities which poverty imposes are not hardships but pleasures. Frugality itself is a pleasure. It is an exercise of attention and contrivance, which, whenever it is successful, produces satisfaction. The very care and forecast that are necessary to keep

expenses and earning upon a level, form, when not embarrassed by too great difficulties, an agreeable engagement of the thoughts. This is lost amidst abundance. A yet more serious advantage which persons in inferior stations possess, is the ease with which they provide for their children. All the provision which a poor man's child requires is contained in two words, 'industry and innocence.' With these qualities, though without a shilling to set him forwards, he goes into the world prepared to become a useful, virtuous and happy man."

"Happy man!" ah, thrice happy if he has partaken plentifully enough of this opium of the people, of a personal, possessive and exclusive religion which preaches contentment to others, while it refuses to share its own well-hoarded store.

When slavery was a part of the established order, for centuries it received the hearty support of most of the churches. For example, in 1853 a typical volume was printed entitled "Plain Sermons for Servants," to keep the slaves contented, with an introduction by Bishop Meade. The following is typical of the teaching of the day: "You should remember that God has placed you where you are. God knows better than you do whether it is best for you to be rich or poor, high or low, in bondage or in liberty. Had He left you to choose your state in life for yourself, you might have made a choice that would ruin you forever!" The last typical sermon in this volume is entitled, "The Faithful Christian Shall Wear a Crown." The opiate is, contentment in slavery here—a crown hereafter!

These men were not conscious hypocrites. They were the typical religious leaders of their day. They were simply blinded by tradition and self-interest. Are the people of this generation subject to similar temptations? Are there equally earnest and sincere men today among employers and leaders of thought who all unconsciously are using their privilege and power to support "things-as-they-are" and to brand as revolutionary every effort to make "things-as-they-ought-to-be"? Are they giving the workers reason to regard religion as the opium of the people, rather than what it was to Jesus, a constructive revolutionary force for the building of a new world?

The consistent Christian and the Russian Communist agree in this, that "no man can serve two masters"; he cannot be true both to God and mammon. He must choose between a

material and a spiritual interpretation of life. Is the thoroughgoing materialistic interpretation of history by economic determinism, or the spiritual interpretation of life valid? There seems to be no escape from this final alternative.

Nineteen centuries ago a Galilean carpenter in an obscure province of the Roman Empire of blood and iron and gold hurled into a warring world a message of Good News. He proclaimed a new social order which he called the Kingdom of God on earth. With bold, concrete, practical idealism he interpreted life as ultimately personal and spiritual. He did not believe in an unexplained and sordid world merely of matter and force, nor in a brute struggle for existence, resulting in the survival of the fittest to fight. He did not advocate a class war motivated by hate, the dictatorship of one class, however large or needy, based upon the compulsion of armed force and a terror, red or white. He was not concerned with economic "surplus values" but with human values.

For him all life derives its meaning and power from its source, and that source is not matter but spirit, not hate but love, not man but God. In him we live and move and have our being, so that all life is of infinite worth, with eternal possibilities.

Life to him was not a sordid scramble for wealth and power. It was not a rushing distraction, a fiercely competing conflict of hate. It gained repose because immovably centered in a single principle—love. Love meant the full sharing of life, in limitless self-giving and self-sacrifice, for the building of a new social order which was at once "the commonweal of God" and a brotherhood of co-operant goodwill. And this new humanity, this practical ideal of a social order which was at the same time a Kingdom of God and a democracy of free men, was gloriously possible. It was worth living and dying for.

And straightway his followers went forth to conquer a world. Where they followed his way of life they achieved his victory. But many forgot his way and took their own. The little indomitable band of militant love became in time a vast and vested hierarchy of wealth and worldly power. Popes, priests, monks, kings and politicians wore his emblem of sacrifice and shame as a graceful ornament. They built him cathedrals of costly stone and stained glass instead of a social structure of a redeemed humanity. They gave their alms and "charity," but not justice and mercy,

to the least of these his brethren. They made ikons and images, hard and fast ecumenical creeds and Protestant dogmas, they offered him faith and works, the gifts of their superfluous wealth, the profession of faultless orthodoxy, or even at times the zealous persecution of heretics and free thinkers when permitted by the secular state. They fought his battles with the sword, they worshipped him; they gave their bodies to be burned in his cause. But the one thing needful they often forgot—Love, the full sharing of life here and now with their fellow men.

Gradually the laboring masses, the weary and heavy laden to whom the Galilean Jesus had preached, drew apart. They became "this multitude that knoweth not the law that is accursed"; fiercely blamed for their irreligion, their atheism, their Bolshevism—a great mass often Marxian and materialistic and finally hardened and embittered. God knows the writer would not make light of true religion, in which he passionately believes, and of which there is much in the world today. He believes in vital personal religion not only, but in necessary organization in all departments of life, including the Church as the organic, social expression of religion.¹

But the masses could not seem to believe in a future heaven promised by a prosperous class which did not practice their professed creed here on earth. So they tried to form a gospel of their own. They, too, sought to build a new social order of brotherhood. They incorporated in their programmes and constitutions many of the principles of the spiritual social order, but they built it on force rather than on freedom, on a class rather than on an all-inclusive brotherhood, and mindful of their lot and the treatment they had received, sometimes on hatred rather than on love. But it was a gospel of a sort, for it was tangible, concrete, immediate, challenging; something here and now for this earth, for which they were willing to die, as they would have done for the spiritual gospel had they seen it lived and practiced in the spirit of Jesus.

Here was a body of labor lacking only a spiritual soul; and there was the Church with a soul but no body of social expression. They represented two incomplete and complementary fragments of one common humanity, and they needed each other. The Church needed to be socialized; labor needed to be spiritualized.

¹ His position in this matter is stated in "Facing the Crisis," pp. 203-231.

Labor has issued the call, "Workers of the world, unite!" Yes, they will, they must unite; they already are uniting. But for what? For a class war, a dictatorship, a terror, a revolution? Most certainly if we drive them to it and if there is nothing left for them but that.

But there is one way left. Why not try Jesus' way of life? Why not share our whole life in "creation's final law"—the law of Love?

One and all we stand today before this final challenge, this ultimate choice. Are we to follow God or mammon? The choice is not a matter of course, a mere matter of profession or creed, or lip service, to a Master whose way of life we crucify and reject. "Mammon" is not a poetical scriptural allusion, it means money, our money, a selfish way of living, a materialistic interpretation of life. It may be the frankly confessed way of the Marxian Communist, the secretly veiled way of the militarist, the respectable and prosperous way of the selfish capitalist, the equally selfish way of the labor leader who is out for his own gain rather than the cause of his comrades, or it may be the consciously or unconsciously hypocritical way of the religionist who professes Jesus' way of life while he denies it in practice and makes religion "a spitting and a byword" to the masses now in open rebellion.

It is thus that Russia constitutes a warning and a challenge to us all. Each must make the choice between a materialistic and a spiritual interpretation of life. One and all, let us work together, not for our class, small or large, privileged or unprivileged, propertied or proletarian, but for the common undivided humanity of one world of brother men.

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